

Lisa Portscher

Subject: FW: Letter in response to email from Brookline Youth Hockey Board
Attachments: Preservation Commission letter_Larz Anderson Ice Rink.pdf

From: phenry617@aol.com <phenry617@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 1:02 PM

To: Parks <parks@brooklinema.gov>; Parks & Rec Commission <parkandreccommission@brooklinema.gov>; Select Board <selectboard@brooklinema.gov>; brooklinezeab@gmail.com

Cc: Alexandra Vecchio <avecchio@brooklinema.gov>; Erin Gallentine <egallentine@brooklinema.gov>; Leigh M. Jackson <lmjackson@brooklinema.gov>; Charles Carey <ccarey@brooklinema.gov>; Melissa Goff <mgoff@brooklinema.gov>; Lisa Portscher <lportscher@brooklinema.gov>; Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>; Jacob Collins <jcollins@brooklinema.gov>; Victoria Pardo <vpardo@brooklinema.gov>; lgellinea@brooklinema.gov; p.selkoe@brooklinema.gov; andhow33@gmail.com; haber.don@gmail.com; p.senopoulos@outlook.com; jske514@aol.com; marydewart@verizon.net

Subject: Letter in response to email from Brookline Youth Hockey Board

To the Brookline Parks and Recreation Commission, Brookline Select Board, and Brookline Zero Emissions Advisory Board,

I am unable to attend the meeting this evening of the Brookline Parks and Recreation Commission, and as such, I would like to let you know briefly of my concerns about the email of March 13 (see below) from the Brookline Youth Hockey Board (BYH).

First, the BYH email makes it sound like the residents of Jamaica Plain and others are opposed to a new Kirrane Rink, which we are not - and never have been. Further, to the best of my knowledge, there have been no "scare tactics" or "misinformation" of any kind.

In the email, they ask supporters to "fight for...the Kirrane Rink," to which there is no objection from virtually anyone, so therefore I would expect them to receive many signatures in support!

However, I would note that in the BYH email, they only mention "a new rink" and appear to go out of their way not to mention their preference to replace one seasonal, outdoor rink, with a massive, year-round athletic complex with two rinks, one covered, plus a two-story infrastructure building and many more parking spaces - and as a result much more year-round traffic, lights and noise. As the Brookline Preservation Commission points out (see below), this latter proposal would "significantly change the use, character, and profile of the Park."

Also, and very important, those who object to building two rinks (and the two-story infrastructure building and many more parking spaces, etc.) are not only JP residents, but many Brookline residents, including ALL of the Town Meeting Members from Precinct 15, which directly abuts Larz Anderson Park. (Why should the objections of those Brookline residents be given short shrift compared to the Brookline abutters of Putterham Woods, whose objections readily defeated the proposal to site two rinks there?)

In an email titled, "Entire Precinct 15 Town Meeting delegation opposes indoor rink at Larz Anderson," these Brookline Town Meeting Members write as follows:

"We add our citizen and park user voices to many who have already objected to the Task Force's focus on securing a year round, 2.5 acre recreation megaplex at Larz Anderson Park. Objector's words so far are noted in the appendix of the 400 page Ice Rink Study including 50 letters submitted in time before a Dec. 31, 2021 deadline."

"However, we do support reconstructing the existing rink with fossil fuel free technology for healthy outdoor skating compatible with the experience of the park's historic and bucolic landscape."

Finally, the Brookline Preservation Commission (BPC), in their letter of June 1, 2022 (attached), stated clearly their preference for refurbishing the Kirrane Rink, and their unequivocal opposition to building two rinks or any covered rink (with the accompanying traffic, etc.) at Larz Anderson, a park so worthy of preservation restrictions that it has the special distinction of being listed on the Massachusetts and National Registers of Historic Places. I quote from the BPC letter, which I encourage all to read carefully in its entirety:

"The existing skating rink has become beloved by generations of Brookline residents and is part of the Town's history. A professionally enclosed rink, or the addition of a second rink, would dramatically change the use and feel of the site. We would therefore urge that the existing rink be preserved in its present form."

To underline their concern, the BPC goes on to say:

"...But even where not within the boundary of the preservation restriction, a doubling (or more) of the footprint for recreational ice skating, would significantly change the use, character, and profile of the Park. A more thorough examination of a variety of alternative sites may suggest new possibilities."

I have much more to say, but those are enough highlights for now. I write this as a resident of Brookline for many years, a current resident of Jamaica Plain, and someone who has long cared deeply about historic preservation.

Let's continue the fight to preserve Larz Anderson Park, and let's rebuild the beloved Kirrane Rink! If we prevail in saving the treasured sanctuary that is Larz Anderson Park, future generations will thank us.

Best,

Paul

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34 Hopkins Road
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From:
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 5:45 PM
To:
Subject: CALLING ALL BYH WARRIORS - LARZ NEEDS YOUR HELP

Greetings Warrior Nation both past and present!

As some of you may know, and most of you knew the day was coming, our beloved rink at Larz is in dire need of attention from the Town of Brookline. It has been on life support for the past two years, and every year it is more and more of an uncertainty. Brookline Youth Hockey and all users of Larz Anderson Rink need your help to get the Town's attention.

We need every BYH family, friend, alum, etc. to sign this petition, which calls on the Recreation Department to accelerate planning for a new rink, and to provide the necessary funds to keep the current rink operational until a new rink can open.

<https://www.change.org/NewLarzRink>

As you will read, there has been way too much delay while the rink's condition continues to deteriorate. We need as many signatures as possible to send the Town the message that walking away from Larz is not an option. Abutters from JP are using scare tactics and misinformation that a new rink may somehow destroy the beauty that is Larz, but the Town needs to hear that we support a new rink AND keeping the park beautiful. These goals are not mutually exclusive!

If you want to learn more, you can take a look at the Skating Rink Task Force's preliminary feasibility study from last year, which outlines concepts for a new rink, and much needed next steps:

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1985/Ice-Rink-Feasibility-Study>

We need to fight for our crown jewel - the Kirrane Rink. There is simply is no other rink like it. Please sign TODAY, and send this link to everyone you know!

We greatly appreciate your help

BYH Board

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